

I am writing to urge you to reject the Governor's proposal.
This is nothing more than a ploy by Gov. Malloy to be able to say that he did not raise taxes.

For years, the State has mismanaged, or abdicated management, of its business. Underfunding teacher and employee pensions, giving handouts to fiscally irresponsible cities, enacting unfunded mandates, the list goes on and on with the State simply deferring fiscal responsibility until sometime in the future.

For all of those years, the small towns of Connecticut have balanced their budgets, have cut back in spending as revenues from the State declined, have reduced services to live within their residents ability to pay.

Now that the future is here, the Governor is still unable to act in a fiscally responsible way. Instead of cutting State spending, he simply continues on as normal, and passes the costs of that spending to the very towns that cannot afford it. Let me be clear about that, we cannot, and will not, accept it.

My town, Colchester, would need to raise property taxes by nearly 10% simply to offset the increased cost passed to us by the State. This eliminates any possibility of increasing, or even maintaining, services to better serve our residents, of increasing programs in schools to better educate our youth, or increasing services to Seniors to assist them in the later years. We will need to cut social services, education spending, senior services and youth services, just to absorb the State share.

Adding insult to that indignity, the State now feels it appropriate to change the predicted budgeted amount after the towns set their budget in reliance on the predicted amount. And to truly insult the towns, the State now also believes it is appropriate to cut revenues to the towns from the budgeted amount. How are towns supposed to budget at all when the State can change the rules of the game, in the middle of the game?

Finally, the idea that the cities need additional money for schools, at the expense of the towns, is foolish. Compare the spending by most small towns to the spending by the major cities and you will find that the cities already outspend the towns by thousands of dollars per student per year.

In addition to that, several of the cities receive more in State spending per pupil than the entire amount spent per pupil in Colchester. The State gives the children of Hartford more than the State and the Town spend, combined, on my daughter. How is that fair?

The idea that throwing more money at the city schools will fix it is the very definition of insanity: doing the same thing over and over, and expecting a different result. I do not know the solution to remedy failing city schools, but I do know that more money is not the answer.

Thomas Babson Kane
860-338-3471
57 Blackledge Drive
Colchester, CT 06415